

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PHNOM 05127 210115Z

20

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

SAM-01 OMB-01 AID-05 SCS-03 SCA-01 OPR-02 PER-01 A-01

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R 201106Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9882

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 5127

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: SOPN, EAID, SREF, SWEL, CB US

SUBJECT: ERRONEOUS PRESS REPORTING REGARDING ALLEGED EVACUATION
OF VOLAG PERSONNEL

1. THE NEW YORK TIMES DISTORTED THE FACTS ON THE PRESENCE
OF VOLAGS IN PHNOM PENH AND THEIR ALLEGED DEPARTURE IN GREAT
NUMBERS.

2. THE FACTS ARE QUITE DIFFERENT. WE HAVE HAD FOUR
AMERICAN VOLUNTARY AGENCIES OPERATING HERE: WORLD VISION,
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE, CARE, AND LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF.
DURING THE PERIOD OF MARCH 10- MARCH 18 A TOTAL OF
6 AMERICANS AND 17 TCNS HAVE LEFT. SOME OF THE AMERICANS
WENT OUT FOR A WELL DESERVED REST AND ARE COMING BACK.
SPECIFICALLY, CARE AND CRS ARE BRINGING IN TWO PEOPLE EACH
THIS WEEK 3 AMERICANS AND 1 TCN), AND WORLD VISION IS
BRINGING BACK 1 TCN.

3. THE LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF ORGANIZATION RECEIVED
ORDERS FROM HOME TO CLOSE THEIR OPERATION IN PHNOM
PENH. THEIR 1 AMERICAN AND 1 TCN DEPARTED THIS MONTH.

4. WORLD VISION HAD 4 AMERICANS ON MARCH 10 AND STILL
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PAGE 02 PHNOM 05127 210115Z

HAS 4 AMERICANS TODAY. IT HAD 8 TCNS WHO WERE ALL

UNDER COMMONWEALTH PROTECTION. THEY DEPARTED ON THE AUSTRALIAN PLANE WHICH TOOK OUT COMMONWEALTH CITIZENS LAST SUNDAY. THEIR DEPARTURE WAS THEIR OWN DECISION.

5. CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICE HAD 13 AMERICANS ON MARCH 10 AND HAS 10 TODAY. IT HAD 25 TCNS ON MARCH 10 AND HAS 17 TODAY. THOSE WHO LEFT DURING THE LAST WEEK WERE SOME DANES, SCOTS AND FILIPINOS. SOME OF THEM ARE ON HOME LEAVE AND ARE EXPECTED TO RETURN.

6. CARE HAD 6 AMERICANS ON MARCH 10 AND HAS 4 TODAY. IT HAD 4 TCNS A WEEK AGO AND HAS THE SAME NUMBER TODAY.

7. THE REDUCTION IN VOLAG PERSONNEL IS PRIMARILY IN TCNS WHO LEFT AT THEIR OWN REQUEST AND WHO WISHED TO AVAIL THEMSELVES OF THE AUSTRALIAN AIRCRAFT WHICH EVACUATED COMMONWEALTH CITIZENS LAST SUNDAY. THE REDUCTION OF A TOTAL OF 6 AMERICANS AMONG THE VOLAGS IS TEMPORARY SINCE 3 MORE AMERICANS ARE COMING IN DURING THE NEXT 48 HOURS AND ARE AWAITING TRANSPORTATION FROM BANGKOK AND SAIGON.

8. THIS IS QUITE A DIFFERENT PICTURE FROM THAT DESCRIBED IN THE TIMES. THE NUMBER OF VOLAG PERSONNEL IN-COUNTRY AT ANY ONE TIMES ALWAYS FLUCTUATES. THEY GO ON HOME LEAVE OR ON WELL-DESERVED SHORT VACATIONS IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. THEY CERTAINLY HAVE NOT BEEN ORDERED BY THE EMBASSY TO REDUCE THEIR ACTIVITIES HERE. QUITE TO THE CONTRARY, OUR EMPHASIS HAS BEEN ON INCREASING THE TITLE II PROGRAM WHICH THE VOLAGS HAVE DONE SUCCESSFULLY.
DEAN

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